

IOWA LIBRARIES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD INVOLVEMENT

Both the **State Library** and **local public libraries** have been deeply involved for years in early childhood learning.

Examples of how the **State Library of Iowa** supports early childhood learning are described below. The State Library partners with the staff of the **Library Service Areas** to carry out many of these activities.

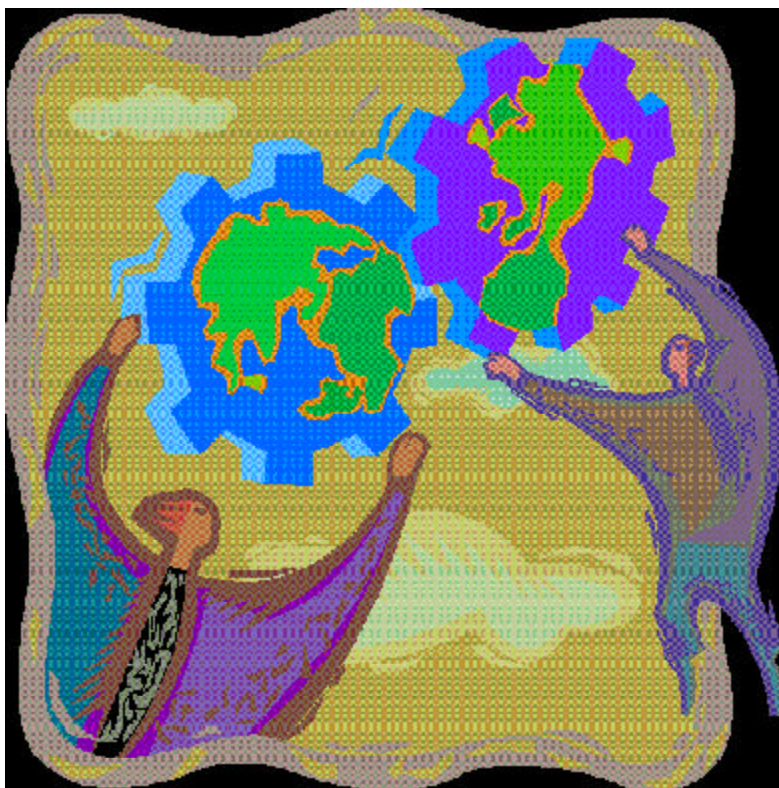
- **Pre-literacy curriculum for public librarians.** The State Library developed and teaches a curriculum especially for public librarians on early childhood literacy development. This curriculum includes strategies for librarians to use with 3-5 year olds in developing "ready to read" skills in reading, language and writing development. Approximately 230 librarians attended the initial overview sessions on early literacy. In addition, follow-up workshops have been held to support individual strategies from the early literacy curriculum such as using nonfiction with preschool children, developing language skills in children and in story retelling. Approximately 250 Iowa public librarians have participated in some or all of the follow-up training sessions.
- **Summer reading program support.** Iowa's public library standards require that, to be eligible to receive state funding, a public library must provide a summer reading program for children 14 and younger, including preschoolers. Annually, the State Library and the Library Service Areas provide a theme, curriculum, resource materials and training for public library staff for their summer library programs. More than 500 public libraries attend the training sessions and offer a summer library program each year - and more than 129,000 Iowa children participate annually.
- **Public library outreach services to day care centers and preschools.** When the State Library revised public library standards ("In Service to Iowa: Public Library Measures of Quality") in 2004, the following standard was added: "The library offers outreach services to day care centers and other entities in which groups of preschool children gather....Outreach service includes collections and programming."

- **Library as stakeholder in Early Childhood Iowa.** The State Library of Iowa has been a stakeholder and regular participant since the beginning in Early Childhood Iowa, a group of committed advocates dedicated to developing a comprehensive system of programs and services for Iowa's children ages zero to five.
- **Collaborative Training.** The State Library of Iowa partnered with the Iowa Department of Education to offer "Building Blocks to Early Literacy" in spring 2004, a two-day conference for early child care providers, librarians, educators and others who work with preschool children. More than 250 attended.
- **Collaborative Training.** The State Library is part of the "Every Child Reads: Ready to Read" work team at the Iowa Department of Education. The State Library youth services consultant, along with De consultant, provided "train the trainer" sessions to almost 500 people.
- **Collaborative Training.** The State Library continues to partner with Iowa Public Television to train librarians to work with parents on early literacy development skills. Recently, librarians in 14 public libraries hosted training sessions for preschool parents on story retelling, which is an early literacy skill.
- **Statewide training.** Earlier this year, the State Library planned and presented six statewide educational sessions featuring noted early childhood language consultant Jane Kitson, from Atlanta, Georgia. The topic of the training sessions was "Linking Language and Literacy Learning." More than 600 people attended these sessions, including librarians, preschool teachers, AEA consultant, child care providers, and other who work with young children.
- **State Library programs and exhibits.** The State Library has exhibited and presented programs about early literacy and libraries at the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children, Family and Consumer Science Association, Iowa Early Care, Health and Education Congress.

Iowa's 543 **public libraries** are an integral part of early childhood learning. For many Iowa children, their local public library provides their first experiences with books, reading and literature. Staff of the **Library Service Areas** and the **State Library** support Iowa's public libraries as they sustain early childhood learning in many ways:

- Most local public libraries offer preschool and toddler story times in the library and also in local preschools, child care centers and in child care homes.
- Many local public libraries offer book delivery to local preschools, child care centers and child care homes.
- A growing number of local public libraries offer or partner to present parent training opportunities on early literacy development.
- Many local public librarians are involved in local empowerment boards and early childhood coalitions in their communities.
- More than 500 public libraries each year offer summer reading programs for children from preschool through high school age. More than 129,000 Iowa children participate in these programs annually.
- Many public libraries sponsor or co-sponsor "Books for Babies" programs in which the parents of all newborn babies in the local community are given a book and information about early literacy development. Early childhood organizations and local hospitals are frequent partners with the libraries in these projects.
- In many Iowa communities, public library staff members are regularly asked to make presentations to groups of child care providers, Head Start employees, and other community organizations on early childhood literacy topics such as selection of books for young children.

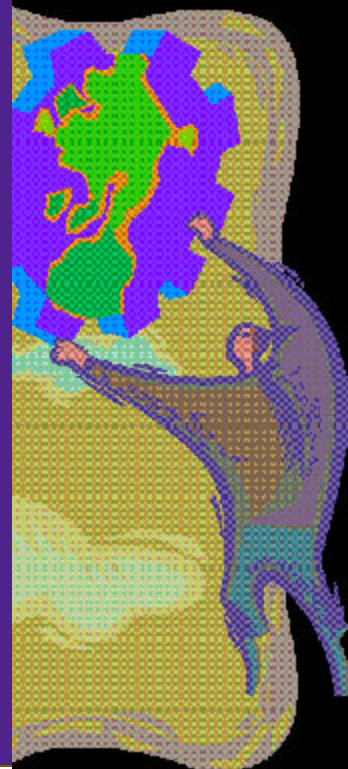
State Library of Iowa



FY04 Annual Report

Mission Statement

The State Library advocates for
Iowa libraries and promotes
excellence and innovation
in library services
in order to provide statewide access
to information
for all Iowans.



Iowa Commission of Libraries

The Iowa Commission of Libraries is responsible for seeing that the State Library fulfills its mission. The Commission has the rule-making authority for the State Library, and receives and approves its budget. It also appoints the State Librarian.

Members:

Pamela Bradley, Burlington
Monica Gohlinghorst, Council Bluffs
Eldon Huston, Johnston
David Boyd, Des Moines, Supreme Court Appointee
Pam Pfitzenmaier, Department of Education Appointee
Paul Roberts, Dubuque
Dale Ross, Chair, Ames
Berta Van Ekeren, Monroe

Message from the Chair of the Iowa Commission of Libraries



Iowa libraries continue to be challenged daily. Although still reeling from the effects of the Reinvention Bill that left most libraries with severe budget cuts, they continue to be mainstays in their communities.

Our libraries provide rich opportunities for lifelong learning. They are often the only place within miles where people can get a music CD, a video, a DVD, magazine articles or a book. And they serve as community centers -- the only public gathering places available in many of Iowa's small towns.

The State Library faces many of the same challenges as public libraries. The radical budget cuts of fiscal years 2002 and 2003 resulted in a 32 percent decrease, or \$533,000, in the library's finances and created dire consequences for the library's book budget. Since 1999, the book budget has been cut by nearly 72 percent, or \$318,506. In addition, 10 percent of state-funded State Library staff positions have been eliminated. State money is no longer available to purchase informational databases. Instead, the state subsidy for EBSCOhost has to be taken from federal funds.

The Iowa Commission of Libraries fulfills its mission by helping the State Library advocate for Iowa libraries and promote excellence and innovation in library services. Last year the Commission appointed the Public Library Standards Task Force to draft a 4th edition of *In Service to Iowa: Public Library Measures of Quality*, which provides guidelines and benchmarks for achieving state accreditation. The task force's hard work -- endorsed by the Iowa library community -- received full support from the Commission.

The number of Iowa public libraries with high speed Internet access jumped from 41 percent in 2002 to 77 percent in 2004, thanks in part to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's gift of 380 computers. Not only are Iowans benefiting from access to the computers, but a \$139,950 training grant from Gates enabled librarians to receive continuing education on technology and information literacy skills. This training, in addition to high speed Internet access, assures that more Iowans are receiving high quality library service.

The Library Service Area Boards continue to function effectively as advocates for library services for all Iowans. In short, 2004, while still a difficult year budget-wise, has been marked by continued improvement for libraries and their patrons.

Dale Ross, Chair
Iowa Commission of Libraries



Message from the State Librarian

In order to prosper in today's information-rich society, Iowans must be able to locate, evaluate and use information effectively. Teaching others how to find and assess information is a unique skill that librarians offer their communities. Information literate people are prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any decision or task at hand.

Iowa libraries have always played a critical role in lifelong learning, but not all Iowans are aware of the services and resources that libraries provide. The State Library continues our emphasis on working with librarians to develop their role as teachers and information navigators, and in facilitating partnerships among libraries of all types to promote information literacy concepts.

Our information literacy activities this past year included subsidizing the EbscoHost databases for public and academic libraries, in partnership with the Area Education Agencies who provide EbscoHost for schools, to create a continuum of learning for Iowa students. We used Library Services and Technology Act monies to fund the Pathfinder Project, which developed tools to assist librarians in their information literacy role. Programming at Town Meetings 2003 included a half-day session on information literacy, and several full-day workshops on public libraries and information literacy have been presented as well. In June 2004, we participated in a statewide information literacy summit which brought together librarians from academic, school and public libraries to discuss progress in helping Iowans be skilled information consumers.

Like good reading skills, information literacy is a natural fit - and a vital service - for libraries of all types. We look forward to continuing our work with Iowa's libraries to promote the role of the librarian in developing Iowans' abilities to find and evaluate information.

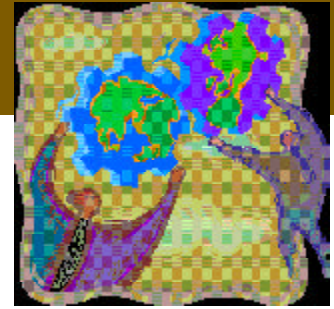
Accomplishments of the past fiscal year include:

- Celebrating the State Library's 165th birthday on September 24, 2003
- Developing the 4th edition of Iowa's public library standards
- Launching WebJunction Iowa, a web site for online courses, software and hardware views, and technical support
- Partnering with the Iowa Attorney General's office to plan the distribution of more than 57,000 music CDs to public and academic libraries in Iowa
- Offering assistance to librarians coping with Reinvention Bill-related budget cuts by developing a press release template on local budget cuts, presenting workshops on "Hard Times/Smart Choices", and surveying libraries to collect and publicize the statewide impact of the cuts
- Enhancing the Iowa Center for the Book programs with the addition of Letters About Literature and the Literary Calendar
- Implementing the "Ask a Librarian" button on the State of Iowa's web page
- Teaching state employees about EbscoHost, the State Data Center web site, searching the web and more during National Library Week

....and many more highlights which are discussed in the following report.

Mary Wegner, State Librarian

Collaboration



Working with others to enhance Iowans' lives has always been a priority of the State Library, and last year was no exception.

Several collaborations benefited the literacy and reading skills of Iowa's youngest citizens. The State Library is a stakeholder in Early Childhood Iowa, a group dedicated to developing a comprehensive system of programs and services for Iowa's children from birth through age five. State Library staff also partnered with the Department of Education in the Every Child Reads project for 3 to 5 year olds; the Family and Consumer Science Association to develop lesson plans on working with high school students in child development classes; and the Iowa Association of School Boards in the development of a pilot project for early literacy in five Iowa communities in Iowa, and to study the link between school libraries and student achievement. Finally, "Building Blocks for Early Literacy" was the theme of a two-day conference sponsored by the State Library, the Iowa Library Association's Children and Young People's Forum, the Department of Education and Iowa Public Television to provide valuable information for librarians, early care and education personnel, and teachers.

In other collaborations, State Library staff traveled last summer with members of the Iowa League of Cities to speak with city leaders about how libraries are funded. They also discussed the impact on libraries of the FY04 budget cuts as a result of the Reinvention Bill, provided an overview of library governance such as the authority of public library boards, and examined the special library levy.

The State Library partnered with the Iowa Library Association to develop a Leadership Institute for 25 Iowa public librarians. The goal for participants was to recognize and identify themselves as leaders; increase their level of confidence about becoming change agents; participate in leadership activities within the Iowa library community; have a greater understanding of leadership and the capacity to provide leadership in a variety of settings; and be more willing to take risks and pursue innovation.

The State Library works with the Iowa Educators Consortium, an initiative of the Iowa Area Education Agencies, to provide a voluntary purchasing program for K-12 schools and all types of libraries that brings statewide school and library purchasing programs under one legal umbrella and one fiscal management group.

The State Data Center is involved with many organizations to help compile and make available state census statistics. Staff are on the national steering committee for the Federal-State Cooperative Program for Population Estimates. They work with the Department of Human Services to include some of its frequently requested county data on the State Data Center's web site. Staff also collaborated with the Iowa State University office of SETA to produce a new CD-ROM ("Iowa by the Numbers"), and compiled a report with the Secretary of State and the City Development Board of city boundaries and annexations for the census bureau. In addition, they took part in the Working Group on Economic Data to identify state agency data that can be used to inform state revenue estimates prepared by the Revenue Estimating Conference.

***Individual commitment to a group effort —
that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.
—Vince Lombardi***

The Bulgarian Story

This year, librarians from Bulgaria and the United States were able to partner and visit each other's countries through the American-Bulgarian Library Exchange (ABLE).

Bulgarian librarians were in Iowa and other states to learn about the roles of libraries in the U.S., develop an understanding of community information centers, develop projects for partnering with libraries and prepare to be advocates for libraries.

At the State Library, the librarians attended workshops on gathering and organizing community information, collaboration with community groups, working with government officials, and marketing the library.

Later in the year, State Library staffer Barb Corson and four other Americans traveled to Bulgaria for two weeks.



Bulgarian librarians visiting the State Library are, from left, Mariana Uzunova, Rayno Raynov, Maya Petrova, State Librarian Mary Wegner, Daniela Donova and Galina Doycheva-Viktorova

Twenty-four Bulgarian librarians participated in a three-day workshop and each agreed to use the information they received to develop a community information center. Corson also provided a train-the-trainer workshop to 10 librarians based on the principles of adult learning and how to make a workshop dynamic and interesting to participants.

Noted Corson, "It was educational to see where Bulgarian librarians are in their various developmental stages and to hear about some of their projects to serve patrons. Working together, we all benefit."



Corson sits on a bench in the book market in Sofia, Bulgaria with the statues of two of the country's famous authors.

Service to State Agencies, Businesses, Medical and Legal communities

State Library staff went the extra mile last year to be sure customers are aware of the many resources available to them.

The official web site of the State of Iowa now carries a prominently placed link to the State Library called "Ask a Librarian." Staff saw an immediate increase in questions on topics such as economic development, health, and safe communities. Students also found the link helpful in completing class assignments. One college student at Kirkwood Community College was working on a report about petroleum shortages, part of which included statistics about improperly disposed used engine oil. State Library staff were eager to help him with the research.

State Data Center staff also collaborated with Information Technology Services on the state's redesigned web site to provide links to the Data Center from every "Fact" or "Facts about Iowa" page.

In addition, the State Library joined forces with the state's Information Technology Enterprise to create a digital library of state documents published in electronic format. Iowa Publications Online provides high quality searching of Iowa state government organizations' electronic publications and permanent public access to those documents. Searchers no longer have to guess which agency handles the information they want.



The State Data Center is Iowa's official source for census statistics about Iowa's people, housing, economy, and government. In recent years, the role of the Data Center has changed, as well as how the information is used. Government agencies (state, city, county), businesses, the news media and other organizations want much more detailed information for annual estimates, program planning, marketing, community, and school issues.

State Data Center staff made presentations to:

- Iowa workforce trends at the statewide Iowa Smart Conference sponsored by the Iowa Department of Economic Development and Iowa Utilities Association;
- The Central Iowa Society of Human Resource Managers about State Data Center services and data;
- State employees on information available through the State Data Center web site;
- The Iowa Association of Regional Councils (State Data Center affiliates) on the State Data Center's program and the role of State Data Center affiliates;

• The Early Care Congress on how to find and use census data relating to early child care issues. In addition, the State Data Center developed an on-line tutorial and Iowa Quick Facts for the State Data Center web site.

Information Services and the Medical Library provide both general and specialized research services and collections to state government employees and the citizens of Iowa. Information on management issues, government policy, patents, and state and federal documents are available. The medical library specializes in providing valuable health-related information to the medical community, attorneys, state, county and city health agencies, librarians, students and the general public.

Information Services and Medical Library staff provided information and training to:

- Hundreds of state employees on how to find information using EBSCOhost and FirstSearch databases, and the Internet to help them do their jobs;
- State employees on grant information, including a bibliography of directories and resources for writing grants, Internet links to foundations and other grantees, and an updated list of grant opportunities -- all available on the State Library's web site;
- State employees, Iowa pharmacists, and medical assistants on the HealthInfoIowa web site, an online resource for consumer health information developed in conjunction with the State Library of Iowa;
- Librarians attending the Iowa Library Association meeting and the Iowa Literacy Council on the new Iowa Publications Online project;
- Staff of the Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Corrections Facility staff, Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Human Services, on information and services available at the State Library.

The State Law Library provides Iowa lawmakers, government employees, the Iowa legal community and the general public with a highly specialized legal collection of treatises, and both state and federal statutory, regulatory and case law.

Law library staff were able to make some substantial changes to the benefit of their customers. Flat screen monitors were added to all eight of the PAC work stations, which provide access to USB ports. The "Westlaw for Patrons" database was upgraded to include full text digital access to over 700 law reviews and journals, in addition to its universal coverage of all state and federal primary legal research material. Since the improvements, staff have noticed a marked increase in the number of regular customers.

State Law Library staff made presentations to:

- Paralegals at the Principal Financial Group on information and services available at the Law Library;
- State employees and attorneys on the basics of researching with Westlaw;

- The Central Iowa Library Alliance on legal resources available in the metro area (in cooperation with the Drake law librarians and the federal courts librarian).

The Law Library, located in the State Capitol, is a tourist attraction and a highly sought after location for groups looking for a beautiful and unique space. Everyone from the Iowa Library Association, to the band Slip Knot, to CBS news has used the location for receptions, photo shoots and news broadcasts. (*Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards, left, was interviewed by CBS newsman Bob Schieffer in the Law Library during the 2004 Iowa caucuses.*)



Iowa Center for the Book

The Iowa Center for the Book, a program of the State Library, initiated two exciting new projects in FY04: Letters About Literature and the Iowa Literary Calendar.

Letters About Literature invites readers in grades 4 through 12 to take part in a national reading-writing contest. To enter, readers write a personal letter to an author, explaining how his or her work changed their view of the world or themselves. Young readers can select authors from any genre - fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic. There are three competition levels: Level 1 for grades 4 through 6; Level II for grades 7 and 8; and Level III for grades 9 through 12.

In its first year, the program drew a surprising 671 Iowa youth from 52 schools. And one Iowa student in each of the three levels placed in the top 10 nationally. As a teacher noted, "I found this to be a great way for students to evaluate books and compare them to their own lives. Great program!"

The literary calendar has two purposes:

- To provide information to the public about literary events taking place across the state
- To provide information for program planners to encourage collaboration and cooperation on events

All types of libraries, bookstores, colleges and other organizations that sponsor literary events were encouraged to submit information on their events for the literary calendar. The Iowa Center for the Book hopes that this will be another avenue for sponsors to provide information about their events and that it will encourage people to attend who might not otherwise find out about an event.

All Iowa Reads entered its second year in FY04 with the book *Niagara Falls All Over Again* by Elizabeth McCracken. In libraries, colleges, schools and homes, Iowans gathered to read and talk about a single title in the same year, which is the goal of the program. McCracken participated in several discussion groups around the state, and capped off the year with a presentation at the Iowa Library Association's Fall Conference. Next year's selection is *The Master Butchers Singing Club*.

The Iowa Center for the Book Advisory Council will continue its mission to stimulate public interest in books, reading, literacy and libraries by supporting these programs and more in the coming year.

Service to Iowa Libraries

Library Development is the State Library's unit that provides information, grants, continuing education, and other programs and services to Iowa libraries.

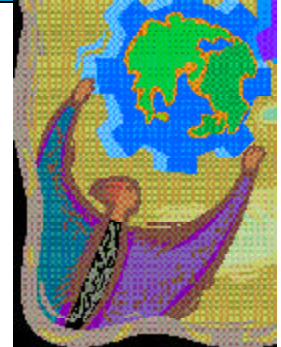
The voluntary Accreditation and Standards Program encourages the ongoing development of quality library services in Iowa. Iowa's public library standards program was established in 1985 to give public libraries a tool for identifying strengths and areas for improvement, to document the condition of public library service in Iowa and to meet statutory requirements.

The manual for the Accreditation and Standards program, "In Service to Iowa: Public Library Measures of Quality," 4th edition, was revised by the State Library's Public Library Standards Task Force in 2003-2004 and approved by the Iowa Commission of Libraries. Revision was needed to: 1) recognize the impact of technology, especially the Internet; 2) base quantitative standards on Iowa-specific statistics; 3) provide additional explanation; and 4) update the administrative components of the standards program.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave the State Library a \$139,500 grant in FY04 to sustain public access computing in public libraries and to provide technology training for Iowa librarians. With the grant, the State Library is contracting with WebJunction for a custom Iowa WebJunction web site that includes access to online courses. The State Library also contracted with BCR for statewide information technology training. Course topics were "Teaching Computers to the Public," "Tech Support on the Fly," and "Security in the Real World." Sub-grants were given to Iowa's Library Service Areas to provide additional technology training in their regions. Finally, the State Library also used Gates grant funds to purchase a portable computer lab to provide statewide training.

There was something for everyone at this year's Town Meetings. State Library and Library Service Area staff performed in a take-off of "Family Feud," where the "Osbournes" and the "Osmonds" duked it out answering questions about the libraries in Iowa. Later in the morning, Library Service Area staff presented information on the 27 cent library levy. The afternoon sessions included information on the new edition of "In Service to Iowa: Public Library Measures of Quality," library legal issues, and personal safety in the library.

The ever popular Summer Library Program drew 129,488 Iowa youth to their local libraries for programs based on the theme "Discover New Trails." Many libraries made a special attempt this year to offer events especially for teenagers. Research has shown that kids who read six or more books during the summer maintain or improve their reading skills, while children who do not lose ground by September.



Library Development staff spend countless hours each year providing presentations and continuing education statewide.

- This year, State Library staff spoke to the Iowa Association of School Boards about school libraries and their link to student achievement. They also touched on the importance of information literacy and the role of the school librarian in teaching it, and the status of school libraries in Iowa using data collected by the State Library.

- The State Library collaborated with the Iowa Department of Education to provide information on the importance of early literacy skills to librarians, preschool teachers, Area Education Agency personnel, consultants and others who work in early childhood.

- Workshops were held statewide for librarians who were planning children's summer library programs. State Library staff suggested ideas about programming, literature and crafts, and emphasized the importance of summer library programs and students' reading achievement.

- Emphasizing the need to promote the library, workshops were held statewide for librarians interested in learning how to design and produce annual reports using Microsoft Word. Staff also walked participants through the process of using WebConnect to create meaningful -- and colorful -- graphs and charts to illustrate statistical information about the library.

- In response to the distressing effects of the Reinvention Bill on libraries, the State Library sponsored a workshop titled "Hard Times/Smart Choices" where librarians were asked to rethink what they could realistically do with the resources available to them.

- "A Public Librarian's Role in the Age of Information" was presented by State Library staff to demonstrate the librarian's role in helping people find the most accurate, trustworthy information available.



Participants at a Summer Library Program workshop look over suggested books.